LABOUR MONTHLY

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LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE SPECIAL

WHY 'PLAN' A SLUMP?
The Editor

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LABOUR'S INCOMES POLICY
and the
TRADE UNION MOVEMENT
J. E. Mortimer

★

BATTLE OF BRIGHTON
T. E Coulishaw, J.P.

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TRUTH ABOUT THAT DEFICIT
Bert Ramelson

★

Zimbabwe and the Commonwealth Conference, G. Nyandoro
Vietnam—Our Responsibility, Hilda Vernon

OCTOBER 1966

Two Shillings

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

WHY 'PLAN' A SLUMP?

Though this be madness, yet there is method in it
SHAKESPEARE

September 19, 1966

The Brighton Labour Party Conference is meeting against an appropriate background fanfare of a roaring crescendo of redundancies, short time, dismissals and closures of pits and factories to demonstrate the triumphs of the economic policies of the Government, the Labour Party Executive and the General Council majority. The price for the narrow acceptance ('reluctant acquiescence') of these policies by the Trades Union Congress is being paid. With all the more reason the battle which was opened at Blackpool will be carried forward at Brighton. There is no parallel for the scale of this battle over the entire field of policy, nor for its seriousness for the whole future of the trade union and labour movement. Even the direct intervention of Premier Wilson on the opening day of the TUC could not prevent the subsequent vote of over four millions against his disastrous economic policies and the wage freeze.

From Blackpool to Brighton

The same issues which dominated Blackpool dominate Brighton. By the measure of the initial agenda of the Labour Party Conference the two subjects raised in the largest number of resolutions carry their own significance. First, Vietnam with 43 resolutions, and not a single one supporting the Government's policy. Second, the 'incomes policy' with 34 resolutions. The combination of these two shows the extent of recognition of the inseparable connection of foreign policy and the wage freeze. (Wilson's absolute silence on this crux of the problem in his elaborate and lengthy speech at Blackpool was the most eloquent part of his speech.) The sharpness of the division revealed at Blackpool is likely to be further demonstrated at Brighton, even if in more muffled form (exclusion of the communist left at Brighton, as against participation at Blackpool). But the votes at either Blackpool or Brighton can be no more than a partial reflection of the real battle which is developing in the country. The debates at Brighton will be taking place amid the echoes of the gunfire of the

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economic offensive which has been let loose and the answering resistance of the working class.

Economics of Bedlam

In the long chronicle of the crimes and follies of the governance of Britain since the war it might seem difficult to establish a new record. Yet Mr. Wilson has achieved this. Incidentally, it may be noted that in his Blackpool speech he replaced his ancient formula of the 'thirteen wasted years' of Toryism by a more up-to-date formula of 'a deeper malaise of fifteen years'—thus apparently including the two years of his own Labour Government of 1964-66 with the thirteen years of Toryism in his tale of woe (let us hope that he does not eventually further revise his dates to reach Tennyson's 'hundred years of gloom'). A new gospel is now being proclaimed. Previously 'planning' was presented as the panacea to hold at bay the spectre of unemployment. Now planning is offered to be welcomed as a means to increase unemployment—to a possible 'acceptable' level in the neighbourhood of half a million according to the hopes held out in Mr. Wilson's parliamentary statement of July 20; but of course in this sphere his most sanguine hopes may turn out to be more than fulfilled. The old 'National Plan' has been pronounced dead, with all its targets unfulfilled. But present signs suggest that the unemployment target of this New Plan may be over-fulfilled. Increased production was once proclaimed as 'the road to more'. Now restriction of production is proclaimed as 'the springboard for expansion'. Not without reason the Scientific Workers' Secretary, J. Dutton, whose contribution was one of the most effective at Blackpool, commented in a speech at Coventry on September 13:

> How short-time working, a decrease in output, and unemployment can lead to a modernisation of industry, I just cannot understand.

The topsy-turvy contradictions of the new economic policy might appear comic, were it not for the real tragedy its consequences are bringing for hundreds of thousands of households suddenly brought down to insecurity and a collapse of living levels.

'Acceptable' Unemployment

In that ghoulish world, far wilder than the puny efforts of 'sci-fiction', of the real would-be practical calculations of American nuclear strategists, the formula of 'acceptable nuclear megadeaths' (a megadeath represents ten million dead—it would be too wearisome to count the corpses by mere millions), that is, of twenty, thirty or forty million dead in a nuclear war as a 'tolerable' level, has become

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a standard factor in their equations. Mr. Wilson has evidently been carried away by the example of his American mentors when in his description of his economic offensive in parliament on July 20 he spoke of a 'not unacceptable' level of higher unemployment. His exact words ran:

> If the figure of unemployment were, after all the redeployment and after the measures for regional redistribution, to rise to a figure between one and a half to two per cent, I do not believe the House as a whole would consider that unacceptable.

Note well the terms. There is no question here of the euphemism 'redeployment' being used, as it was often used by government apologists in the Congress debate, as a soft word for unemployment. Mr. Wilson made clear that his calculation for higher unemployment is intended to be fulfilled *after* all the proposed 'redeployment' and 'regional redistribution' has taken place. The figure of 2 per cent would be 470,000. But the way the rate is rising now, the real figure may be considerably higher. After all, Mr. Wilson has always been 'accident-prone' in his predictions—as in his famous prediction of 'weeks, not months' at Lagos for the approaching demise of the Smith regime. And if the figure should rise higher, he can always claim that he was 'blown off-course' by whatever event he chooses to single out for blame, such as the workers' resistance, or unexpected international factors.

'Two Million Unemployed' Trick

In his presidential address to the TUC, Chairman O'Hagan said:

> In my life I have had two spells of 'signing on' at the Labour Exchange. Three of the best years of my life were wasted. I know from bitter experience how soul-destroying unemployment can be. I do not want that to happen to anyone.

'Not to anyone'? But the Congress under his chairmanship voted for a policy openly proclaiming the aim of extension of unemployment to hundreds of thousands. How can such a contradiction be possible? There is no doubt that the bitter experience described by veteran O'Hagan profoundly coloured the thoughts and feelings of all the older delegates. And it was precisely on this basis that the trick was worked. The Government's policy for higher unemployment was presented as the rock of salvation to prevent 'two million unemployed'—ignoring the familiar experience that each extension of unemployment gives rise to extending repercussions leading to further extension of unemployment, until such time as, the slump having performed its function of weeding out smaller businesses and

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weakening the position of the workers, the 'normal' business cycle can be resumed. In other words, the delegates were persuaded to swallow the dose of poison in the fond belief that this was the way to avoid a bigger dose of the same poison. 'Prisoners at the bar', declared the magistrate, 'I am sentencing you to ten years imprisonment in order to save you from the horror of twenty years imprisonment.' Whereupon the prisoners unanimously (or at any rate by about fifteen to fourteen) voted for ten years imprisonment and expressed their eternal gratitude and trust and confidence in the magnanimous magistrate who was saving them from twenty years imprisonment.

A 'Socialist' Tiger

But the trick for putting over the new economic offensive goes further this time than the simple device of evoking the scare of the memories of the 'thirties. The new formula is to present the most ruthless capitalist offensive for cutting wages and extending unemployment as a triumphant demonstration of 'planning' and 'collective principles' and even 'socialism' in contrast to the horrors of the 'capitalist jungle' or 'free-for-all' of the old trade unionism fighting for benefits for its members. 'If we were to regard planning as dead,' proclaimed the Engineers' President, Sir William Carron, in presenting the resolution for 'full support' of the Government's economic policy and the wage freeze, 'we are back in the capitalistic jungle which this movement was set up to alter'. 'Back in.' So we are apparently not now in the 'capitalistic jungle', whose laws are at this moment revealing their typical expression in the tiger's leap of the economic offensive and the wage freeze.

Who Fights for the Low Paid Workers?

Every right-wing trade union leader in advocating the 'incomes policy' wept tears over the low paid workers (though most of the unions representing the lower paid workers voted against the policy). But none of them attempted to show concretely how the restriction of the wages of the more strongly organised workers would go to swell the wages of the low paid workers, instead of going to swell the profits of the employers. Certainly the mass of low wages, always hidden in the widely publicised Ministry of Labour statistics every few months depicting the 'average' earnings of less than one-quarter of the workers, and especially the additional exploitation of women workers by increasingly unequal pay, is of urgent concern to the trade union movement, and requires collective action to fight it.

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But experience has always shown that every victory of the more strongly organised sections is of vanguard significance for strengthening the conditions for the advance of all sections. Altruistic self-abnegation by the more highly paid strongly organised workers can only benefit the employers, not the low paid workers. This is the real significance of the crocodile tears of professed sympathy for the low paid workers to cover the reality of the capitalist offensive against the organised working class. Certainly the laws of the capitalist jungle are cruel. There is no abstract justice in the capitalist jungle. So long as capitalism exists, every gain is only won by the organised strength of the workers and by the active use of that organised strength. That organised strength should be used to raise the levels of all sections, and not least to try to begin to make effective the immemorial annual resolutions about equal pay, in place of supporting policies of the Government and the employers which are openly designed to cut real wages of all workers without exception.

What Is 'Planning'?

Harold Macmillan in his recently published memoirs has boasted in his modest fashion that he was the pioneer of planning with his books *The State and Industry*, published in 1932, *Reconstruction: A Plea for a National Policy* and *Planning for Employment*, at a time when, as he tells us, planning was 'a dirty word'. He adds complacently that all his then so novel ideas (described by him as widely considered 'almost revolutionary') are accepted by everybody today. Of course he might claim to be a pioneer in comparison with George Brown, who boasted in introducing his ill-fated 'National Plan' last year that this was the first time the attempt had been made to plan the whole economy. But both are in reality equally second-hand. The facts cannot be so easily hidden. Mr. Macmillan's adaptable memory may play him some odd tricks, as when in the course of those same memoirs he covers Munich and describes the scene in parliament when all rose to their feet to cheer and applaud Chamberlain and wish him godspeed on his way to put through the deal with Hitler. Magnanimously Mr. Macmillan admits that in the excitement of the moment he also rose and cheered, but he adds that there was 'one man' in that parliament who remained seated and silent: Winston Churchill. The fact that on that memorable day there was 'one man' in that parliament who neither cheered nor remained silent, but who spoke out at the time, and not after the event, against the betrayal of Czechoslovakia, the sole Communist M.P. William Gallacher,

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appears to have slipped his memory. However, the record of *Hansard* exists, and history cannot be so easily changed.

Socialist Planning and Capitalist Planning

Similarly with planning. The conception of planning arose from communism. The first five-year plan was launched in the Soviet Union in 1928. Universal derision was expressed in the Western world at this crazy idea of communists that it could be possible to plan a country's economy. Therefore planning was at that time a 'dirty word', i.e., a communist conception and policy. But when the first five-year plan had achieved by 1932 a successful fulfilment and measure of advance without equal in economic history, while during the selfsame years capitalism had gone through its severest crisis, also beyond any parallel in economic history, all the experts and politicians of capitalism began to sit up and take notice and pour out all kinds of ideas and proposals for 'planning'. Macmillan was only a 'pioneer' in the sense of being an early representative of this wave of capitalist imitators. But socialist planning is based on the foundation of socialism: that is, the social ownership of the means of production. To direct the use of the means of production it is necessary to own them. If they are owned by the capitalists, they can only be operated for the purposes of the capitalists, that is, for the highest possible profit, and the state operates as an instrument for this purpose. In monopoly capitalist society 'planning' operates according to the laws and requirements of state monopoly capitalism, and should not be confused with phrasemongering about 'socialism'. On all this question of the different meanings of 'planning' in different contexts and types of society a fuller treatment has already been given in these Notes a year ago, in October 1965, under the title *Blind 'Plan'*, dealing with George Brown's abortive 'National Plan' and correctly predicting the present fate of this 'work of fiction', as we called it at the time.

Planning—Facts and Fiction

Can state monopoly capitalism plan? Certainly for war. In wartime the state provides the limitless market; therefore a Lloyd George or a Beaverbrook can plan the maximum extension of production; profits soar. But in peacetime different laws prevail, as the dreamers soon discovered who at the end of each world war imagined the same mechanism could be used to end the housing shortage and babbled about rapidly constructing all the houses required like 'a wartime operation'. In peacetime state monopoly capitalism can plan for

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restriction, just as in wartime for destruction. It can order farmers or manufacturers not to produce, pay them not to produce, fence them round with licences and planning restrictions, which hit the small man and benefit the monopolies. But it cannot *order* any capitalist firm to produce anything, unless it offers a contract at a sufficient profit. It can only try to coax them to produce anything that is required, if this does not arise automatically from the market economy, by bribes; by tax rebates, special credits, guarantees, subsidies. So arises the monstrous structure which has been demonstrated in the present state of the aircraft industry, on which the state has spent thousands of millions of pounds of taxpayers' money as subsidies to the private monopolies, and on which the TUC correctly decided that it would be much cheaper and more efficient to own the industry. The power of the state, if the main body of the economy is owned by the private monopolies (in reality the so-called 'public' monopolies or nationalised corporations are run on similar lines for the profits of the private property owners), can thus only operate as the servant of the monopolies, that is, for their profit. All the dream-fantasies of a Crossman or a Fabian *New Statesman* can make no difference to this hard economic reality.

'Profits, Prices and Incomes' Fairy Tales

Hence the blind folly, to call it by no worse name, of the pretence to establish by planning equal control of 'profits, prices and incomes'. Practical experience has already sufficiently demonstrated this theoretical truth which follows from the nature of state monopoly capitalism. Since July 20 the prices of hundreds of commodities have risen. Does the Government act against this? On the contrary. Ministers make clear that this was the object of their policy, to cause by taxation (increased purchase tax, the selective employment tax), 'reasonable' increases in prices, so as to ensure, in conjunction with frozen wages, what is euphemistically called a 'necessary reduction in purchasing power', or what used to be called more bluntly in the days of Baldwin an all-round cut in real wages. If any particular price increases go beyond this 'reasonable' level, does the Government pounce upon the offenders or send round inspectors to catch them? On the contrary. The Minister blandly suggests that housewives (who have not the slightest means of knowing the statistical facts of the effects of increased taxation, service charges, wholesalers' costs, transport costs, all of which would require an army of officials to ascertain) to write and tell him all about it. Since

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July 20 the list of soaring dividends has been published in *Labour Fact Service* every week, with increases ranging up to 100 per cent. Does the Government pounce upon the offenders? On the contrary. The Minister blandly reassures anxious hearers that the co-operation has been wonderful and that the examples of increased dividends have not really been so numerous.

Planning Against the Workers

But when it comes to wages the tune changes. Then stern emphasis is laid on the necessity to establish statutory control by Part IV of the Act, in order to enforce the wage freeze with penal sanctions against trade unionists. Even productivity agreements, with incentive returns for increased productivity, have so far come under the ban. Thus the state of monopoly capitalism acts as the instrument of monopoly capitalism to enforce its wishes on the workers. This is the old familiar role of the state in each stage of class society to act as the instrument of the exploiting class in order to protect the maintenance of exploitation. When the Black Death in the Middle Ages brought a shortage of labour, and a consequent strengthened bargaining position of the wage labourers to raise wages, the Statute of Labourers was introduced to hold down wages by law. When the mass unemployment of the nineteen-thirties left the workers in a weak position to resist the employers, non-intervention by the state and repudiation of state control became the official dogma (so that a Macmillan can today complacently look back upon himself as having been a heretical rebel at that time in having advocated planning). When the post-war phase of reconstruction, technological innovation and extended arms expenditure on a semi-war level, with accompanying inflation, has brought a period of relatively fuller employment, with consequent strengthened bargaining power of the organised workers to fight the effects of rising prices and win increases in wages, state power is invoked to hold down wages by law, in reality reduce wages by state increasing of prices alongside frozen wages, and extend unemployment to the level judged indispensable for the 'normal' functioning of capitalism. All this represents the regular role of the state in state monopoly capitalism. The fact that this executioner's work has to be performed by Labour Ministers makes no difference save that the apologetic speeches become more incoherent and hypocritical, with much babbling of 'socialism'.

Function of Trade Unions

But what do the trade unions do in this situation? Are they to bow

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their heads under the yoke and abandon their purpose of using their organised strength to fight the employers for advances? In that case why should the members continue to pay subscriptions? For friendly benefits which are becoming in practice little more than an adjunct to the state system? Or should they repudiate the wage freeze and legal threats, and carry on the fight for their members? This was the central issue at the Blackpool TUC. It continues to dominate the industrial situation today. No wonder the question raised some time back by the reflective mind of George Woodcock 'What are we here for?' became repeated by speakers on all sides. Frank Cousins, leading for the opposition amendment, brought this key question to the forefront.

> He referred to the question posed by Mr. Woodcock last year asking what the trade unions were here for. It was and still is, said Mr. Cousins, to protect the interests of members the unions represented and to improve their standards of living, assist in the growth of economic progress. 'That is what the trade union movement is about, but more important is the question of where we are going from here.'
>
> (*Daily Telegraph* report, September 8, 1966)

The same theme was pursued by other speakers.

TUC Constitution

The old official answer to this question was provided by the Constitution of the TUC (see *Labour Monthly*, September 1962, for a reprint of the essential clauses). The rules governing the work of the General Council laid down key Objects of the TUC to include (1) the fight for social ownership: 'social ownership and control of natural resources and of services' (Rule 2A); (2) common action on wages and conditions: 'promote common action by the trade union movement on general questions such as wages and hours of labour' (Rule 8d); (3) the fight for peace: 'that the trade union movement may do everything that lies in its power to prevent future wars' (Rule 8k). The aim of the fight for socialism has long been abandoned by the right-wing spokesmen. It is worth noting that the Editor of the *New Statesman* (September 16) in his enthusiastic article to acclaim the wage freeze and Part IV as a 'socialist' triumph ('How Labour Blundered Into Socialism') explicitly excludes socialism as 'a pipe dream':

> It is pointless to argue that wage and price regulation is only acceptable as part of a complete socialist structure in which virtually all wealth is publicly owned. This, for the present at least, is a pipe-dream.

Right-wing reformism long ago decided that the task of the trade

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unions is to be freed from socialist theorising and to concentrate on practical immediate day-to-day reforms and improvements of wages and hours and conditions within capitalism. But now a stage has been reached when the right wing has jettisoned this objective also. It has become the platform and trumpet call of the left wing to fight for improved wages and conditions, while the right wing proclaims the programme for the cutting of real wages and the imposition of penal sentences on trade unionists pursuing normal trade union activities as the glorious fulfilment of 'socialism'.

From Citrine to Crossman

Mr. Crossman in his speech at Coventry on September 9 announced that the six months wage freeze and six months severe restraint were not to be regarded as merely temporary emergency measures, but as a long-term policy representing 'a break-through into new patterns of industrial relations and new experiments in the co-operation between State planning and collective bargaining'. Not quite so new as all that. Ever since the betrayal of the general strike the aim of integrating the unions into close co-operation with monopoly capitalism and the state has been consistently advocated by the Bevin-Citrine school of leadership. In his presidential address to the Norwich TUC in 1937 Bevin claimed that the TUC had 'now virtually become an integral part of the State'. In the period of Mondism the Bristol TUC in 1931 adopted a resolution for a 'planned economy':

> This Congress welcomes the present tendency towards a planned and regulated economy in our national life. Having regard to the seriousness of the economic situation, Congress expresses the view that only by a comprehensive planning of our economic development and regulated trade relations can the needs of the present day be met. Congress therefore instructs the General Council boldly to advance this policy, both nationally and internationally, keeping in mind that in order to maintain and improve the standard of living the people as consumers must be protected by public control and regulation from exploitation. (General Council resolution carried by 2,866,000 to 749,000 votes.)

But planning was then presented as a means to 'maintain and improve the standard of living'. It has been left to the present right-wing leadership to advocate planning as a means to freeze and cut wages.

Corporate State?

Certainly in a socialist state the trade unions will fully co-operate with their own workers' government (not with monopoly capitalists)

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in running the economy, protecting and improving the wages and hours and conditions of the workers, ensuring equal pay of men and women workers, raising the level of the social services, paid holidays and early retirement pensions, and protecting the rights of individual workers in the factories through their elected factory committees. The TUC delegation which has now gone to visit the Soviet trade unions, although composed of right-wing representatives and therefore with mutual recognition of both sides representing different political viewpoints, can hardly fail to report something of the strength and active role of the Soviet trade unions at every level from the top spheres of economic planning and management to the factory floor. But the opposite conception of the co-operation and integration of the trade unions with monopoly capitalism and its state machinery, which Mr. Crossman seems to see as 'a break-through into new patterns of industrial relations' is by no means a new invention of the Labour Government. The first pattern was devised and adumbrated four decades ago in a form which became notorious. Its author was Mussolini. It was called the Corporate State. Methods are more sophisticated today. No-one would wish to equate the present ideas put forward by Mr. Crossman with the economic ideology of fascism. But the trend to a system of state regulation of wages from above, a kind of American-style business partnership of big unions with the big monopolies, and penal laws against strike action or hitherto normal activities of trade unionists and shop stewards, is a dangerous trend.

Labour's Choice—Clause IV or Part IV?

This is the grave battle for the whole future of the labour movement which will find expression at the Brighton Labour Party Conference. Years ago Mr. Gaitskell and his associates launched their offensive against Clause IV—that clause of the 1918 Constitution which reflected the impact of the 1917 revolution by proclaiming for the first time the aim of socialism described as 'the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange'. The rank and file defeated that offensive. Mr. Gaitskell was too honest. His successors have better understood the continuance of the technique pursued by his predecessors—to ignore the objective in practice without demanding a written authorisation. But the present-day leadership have now offered an alternative. Leaving Clause IV as the holy museum relic enshrining the aim of socialism in the Constitution, they have now produced as the practical guid-

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ance for real life Part IV of the Prices and Incomes Act—imposing criminal sanctions on trade unionists to ensure class co-operation with the big monopolies.

Brighton and Beyond

The price of labour imperialism has indeed come home to hit every household in the country. For by this time every informed trade unionist and socialist knows that the loudly publicised crisis of sterling and deficit in the balance of payments, in the name of which this offensive against the workers has been let loose, is entirely due to the Government's own reckless overseas and arms expenditure and the overseas expenditure of the big monopolies, for purposes of overseas military domination and economic exploitation, and is not at all the consequence of the level of consumption or wages at home. Hence the fight to defeat this offensive at Brighton and beyond is at the same time the fight to change the whole line of policy at home and abroad, towards objectives corresponding to the purposes of peace, the defence and improvement of the living standards of the people, the protection of the rights of trade unionists, and the true further aims of the labour movement. Brighton will prove, not the final battleground, but a significant forum in this developing fight which governs the future of Britain.

R.P.D.

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A SERIOUS CALL

READERS of *Labour Monthly* do not need to be told that in the coming months of sharpening and political struggles every weapon of the left will be needed.

AS such a weapon *Labour Monthly* has played a full part (indeed, has won a world-wide reputation for it) in helping to shape opinion in the trade union and labour movement through all the battles of these forty-five years. Today the need is greater than ever.

BUT the same economic offensive, which arises from the Government's policy, and which compels the battles now opening, is also hitting our journal hard.

RISING costs endanger our continuance. We have begun to run at a loss. This may compel us unwillingly to raise our price. But first we wish to make a special appeal to our readers for their active help. We have no wealthy financial backer. We have no subsidies from any source. We cannot pass on deficits to be paid by someone else. We are performing the feat, possibly unique for a serious monthly periodical nowadays, of covering all costs from sales to readers, with the help of small donations from readers (all publicly and individually acknowledged) to bridge any gap.

WE have to pay our way or go under. That is the economic law of our existence.

THE welcome response of our readers to our Birthday Fund for our forty-fifth anniversary is helping to tide us over for the moment. Now we appeal to our readers for:

1. a permanent increase in donations to a target of £100 a month;
2. active help to win new readers.

There are thousands on the left who would find our journal useful if they knew it. But we have no machinery to reach them. Only you can reach your friend in the union or at work, or in the political movement, or among students and young people, who would find in our journal reasoned answers to the questions they are asking. Experience shows that most new readers, once introduced, become permanent readers and staunch friends.

ONLY on a few rare occasions during these forty-five years have we made such an appeal to our readers in conditions of emergency. On every occasion our readers have responded. We are confident they will respond this time also.

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With all good wishes in the fight ahead.

EDITORIAL BOARD.

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BATTLE OF BRIGHTON

T. E. Coulishaw, J.P.*

IT is now quite clear that there is a substantial section of the Labour Party's membership which is bitterly disappointed at the course which is being followed by the Government. Ever since the election last March there have been many manifestations of this fact, and the final agenda published for the Labour Party Conference serves to bring such things to a head.

Discontent is widespread throughout the Party and indeed throughout the movement as a whole. Now the agenda makes it quite clear that the whole range of the Government's policy is under fire from all quarters within the Party. Progressive delegates at the Conference owe it to their supporters to take this final opportunity to bring up the Party leadership with a jerk against reality.

Three main issues must be on the minds of all those who have a care for the future. They are: first, peace, coupled inevitably with the problem of Vietnam; second, justice coupled with the affair in Rhodesia; and third, socialism, which is extremely difficult to couple in the same sentence with the Government's prices and incomes policy.

Priority must be given to the issue of Vietnam, and there must be an effective demand for a positive policy which will bring that disgusting war to a speedy end. It is not enough for the Prime Minister to tell the Conference that he has tried, or is trying, to halt the war, because that would be like a man saying that he is trying to freeze water with a blow lamp. Britain must dissociate itself completely from American folly in this area: demand an end to all bombing, and press for a withdrawal of all foreign troops from the war area. Only then will it be reasonable to expect co-operation of any kind from Hanoi.

It does not need the Prime Minister to tell us that the whole problem of Vietnam is fraught with difficulties. We have all known it to be so right from the very beginning. It was difficult when Mr. Wilson sought the position of Prime Minister, and he was only elevated to that high office because his supporters, and the electorate, were convinced that a Socialist approach to the problem would overcome the difficulties. It is now high time that such an approach was made.

The legal position in Rhodesia is crystal clear. The Government at home is ready to demonstrate to its own people just how tough it can be in the business of 'governing'; it must now be made to bring back

* Alderman Coulishaw is chairman of Rugeley U.D.C.

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law and order to this unfortunate land. Mr. Wilson must not be encouraged to see the problem in personal terms, but every moment that Smith exists to practise his racialist policies is a fresh affront to human dignity. The Labour Party must demand that the Government lives up to the Party's avowed historical principles. Britain has real responsibility here, and the conference must make it clear that there can be no compromise with racialist tyranny.

There must be a full discussion of the so-called 'prices and incomes policy', and it is certain that considerable confusion will be introduced into the debate. No doubt there will be frequent accusations of disloyalty levelled against any critics of the Government. The Conference must make it clear that it represents the movement as a whole and that the movement is extremely critical of the Government for the way it is tackling the nation's economic problems. Wages are being statutorily frozen, whilst there is no action at all being taken against constant price increases—not even threatened.

The Labour Government was elected not to manage capitalism the more effectively, but because it seemed to offer an opportunity to replace that worn out philosophy with a step towards Socialism. The aim of the Government's critics at the Conference should not be the defeat of a Labour Government, but to re-capture it for Socialism. It will be a very difficult task in the circumstances, but it is quite possible. The Labour Party was created to represent those 'who work by hand or brain', and unless its policies are designed to benefit just those people, then it has lost its *raison d'être*. There is no difference between the national interest, and those who work for the good of the nation. Gamblers and speculators deserve no consideration.

Everyone in the Labour Party from the Prime Minister downwards has always known that any attempt to build even the most elementary type of Socialist society is bound to bring on its builders the wrath and the fury of world capitalism. This is nothing new, and it is assumed that Mr. Wilson had taken this into account when he offered to apply Socialist solutions for the nation's problems. It is not good enough to complain that the 'gnomes of Zurich' have forced a Labour Government to adopt classical Tory methods.

The working-class is not afraid to make sacrifices, if they are in order to establish a Socialist society. But the Conference must make it clear to the Prime Minister that he must expect a distinct lack of enthusiasm if he asks us to sacrifice our principles merely to benefit our traditional Capitalist enemy.

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LABOUR'S INCOMES POLICY AND THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

J. E. Mortimer

AT the General Election held earlier this year probably more than 90 per cent of active trade unionists—branch officers, stewards, committee members—supported the Labour Party. Yet within a few months the TUC approved by only the narrowest majority a report from the General Council expressing 'reluctant acquiescence' in the incomes policy of the Government.

The Government started its new period of office with the goodwill of trade unionists. Many of them were sympathetic to the view that there should be 'a planned growth of incomes'. What has gone wrong? Why is it that representatives of millions of workers voted to oppose the Government's policy and representatives of millions of others decided to accept it, but only reluctantly? Such a result cannot but give rise to serious questioning as to the validity of the Government's policy or about the very evident doubts and hesitations of the trade union movement.

One theory which is being advanced by those who support the Government's policy is that the unions are so committed, by tradition and sectional interest, to the bargaining of a 'free labour market' that they cannot adjust their thinking to the requirements of economic planning. The *New Statesman*, for example, has been suggesting that the Government's incomes policy really represents the first stumbling steps towards socialism and should, therefore, be supported in principle by the left of the labour movement.

I believe this to be a fundamentally wrong reading of the situation. This is not because those of us on the left in the trade union movement, who are strongly committed to the idea of economic planning, have fought shy of planning when applied to wages and salaries. The plain fact is that the policies of the Government at the present time do not constitute the kind of economic planning which we have always advocated.

What then, in substance, are these policies of the Government?

First: To close the deficit on the balance of payments by cutting back production, imposing a freeze on wage increases, deflating the economy and increasing unemployment. Essentially this is a continuation of the remedies adopted by the Conservative Government

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when it was faced with similar problems. There are, however, two differences. The wage freeze is much more rigid, and is accompanied by legislation which can, temporarily at least, destroy certain very important trade union rights. The second difference is that the Government have tried to some extent to protect the social services against the worst of their own deflationary policies. The Tories usually made the social services the first target for attack.

Second: The Government remain committed to foreign and military policies which have played a major part in creating the balance of payments deficit. It cannot be repeated too often that Britain has not failed as a trading nation. The trading figures taken over a period show beyond serious doubt that British exports are more than sufficient to pay for imports. A trading surplus has been converted into a balance of payments deficit by overseas military expenditure, the export of capital and periodic speculations against sterling which are inevitable so long as it remains a reserve international currency. (There was, incidentally, a very informative article on reserve currency in the September issue of *Labour Research*. Readers who, like myself, feel the need to try to understand more about international liquidity and reserve currency should consult this article. We should not be put off from examining the Government's policy because Ministers use terms which are not within our everyday speech.)

To describe the main lines of the Government's policies—deflation, a wage freeze, and a continuation of the international commitments which are principally responsible for the balance of payments deficit—as socialist planning, is to contradict the real meaning of words. Nor do the Government's policies provide the basis for 'a planned growth of incomes'. They are much more likely to result in unemployment for thousands of workers and broken agreements on wages and salaries.

It should not be overlooked that the Government has *not* introduced a price freeze. The daily shopping experience of workers' wives provides the evidence to substantiate this assertion. Prices have risen and are continuing to rise despite the Prices and Incomes Act. Indeed the White Paper 'Prices and Incomes Standstill' does not provide for a prices standstill. It gives exemption to the extent that 'increases in prices or charges may be necessary because of marked increases which cannot be absorbed, in costs of imported materials, or which are due to action by the Government such as increased taxation'.

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The business and financial press have not been slow to point out that, given the exemptions provided in the White Paper, this is not a price freeze. Many manufacturers and traders can claim that somewhere or another they are affected by increased charges due to seasonal variations in supply, higher costs of materials or changes in taxation. In some cases traders have used the excuse of increased taxation to introduce a more than proportionate increase in prices.

The Prices and Incomes Act reinforces the wage freeze with new powers against labour in a manner without peace-time precedent in Britain since the emergence in the 1870's of the trade union movement from the worst disabilities of common law doctrines and earlier repressive legislation.

These new powers are far reaching. Employers can be given legal immunity to break contracts of employment under which they have undertaken to pay higher wages to their workers. A new criminal liability has also been introduced for unions and trade unionists. It reads:

> If any trade union or other person takes, or threatens to take, any action by way of taking part, or persuading others to take part, in a strike, with a view to compel, induce or influence any employer to implement an award or settlement in respect of employment at a time when the implementation of that award or settlement is forbidden under the foregoing provisions of this part of this Act, he shall be liable (a) on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds, and (b) on conviction on indictment to a fine which, if the offender is not a bodycorporate, shall not exceed five hundred pounds.

Under the Prices and Incomes Act the Government are empowered, by issuing Orders, to forbid higher wages or salaries to be paid to particular groups of workers or to workers employed in a particular industry. This power lapses one year after the passing of the Act. Claims, awards or settlements can however be referred for investigation and report to the Prices and Incomes Board. A temporary standstill can be imposed. This power does not lapse one year after the passing of the Act.

It now seems, according to a speech of one Minister of the Crown, that it is the Government's intention to continue with its strict regulation of wage bargaining after the one-year period envisaged in the Prices and Incomes Act. The measures which were introduced, it was claimed, to meet an emergency may become in a modified form a permanent feature of British capitalism. The final answer, however, will rest not only with the Government. Workers will judge policies by their experience. They want full employment,

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rising living standards and better social services. They will judge the new legislation by how it affects the realisation of these objectives.

There is an alternative to the Government's policies. It is to close the balance of payments deficit by a substantial cut in overseas military spending. The Government ought also to cancel the orders which it has placed, as recently as this year, for American military aircraft. The cost of these orders runs into hundreds of millions of pounds.

By cutting overseas military expenditure drastically and quickly the Government would be able to reverse its domestic deflationary principles. New resources would be available for expansion. It is through expansion—and only through expansion—that the workers of Britain can be assured of full employment, rising living standards and better social services.

REDUNDANCIES IN BELFAST

Billy Wallace*

FOUR THOUSAND aircraft workers, 50 per cent of the labour force in Short Brothers & Harland, Belfast, face the sack in 1966 and 1967. This arises from the Westminster Government's decision to cancel the HS.681 and instead buy 'Hercules' aircraft from the USA; the completion of the 'Belfast' freighter contract, and the run down in the sub-contract work for the VC.10.

Despite the fact that 69½ per cent of the shares in the Company are held by the Westminster Government, since 1953 practically annually, redundancy of one form or another has faced the workers in Shorts. It is a tribute to the efforts of the workers and the trade union organisation that the industry is still in being in Northern Ireland.

The Plowden Committee Report on the aircraft industry brought forward two basic recommendations, namely: the Government should purchase shares in the major consortiums, and a link should take place between Irish and European manufacturers. These basic recommendations already obtain in Shorts as instanced by the 69½ per cent holding by the Westminster Government and in partnership with Dutch and German Aircraft Manufacturers they are producing the Fokker F.28. Yet Plowden recommended the elimination of the aircraft industry in Northern Ireland with Shorts projects being transferred to the two major consortiums.

Since the publication of the Plowden Report and the run down

* Mr. Wallace is Chairman of Short Brothers & Harland Works Committee.

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above was announced, a magnificent campaign has been waged by the workers and shop stewards in the factory—lobbying the N. Ireland and Westminster Parliaments, picketing the Ministry of Economic Affairs, contacting Aldermen and Councillors all over N. Ireland, obtaining resolutions of support from Chambers of Trade & Commerce, churches, shopkeepers, urban & district councils, distribution of 20,000 leaflets to the general public and to British TUC delegates, meetings with the Prime Minister of N. Ireland and the Minister of Aviation, and culminating with a mass demonstration to the N. Ireland Houses of Parliament demanding the right to work.

The campaign has been successful in obtaining assurances from the Westminster Government, including the Prime Minister: '*That Shorts would remain a part of the United Kingdom aircraft industry and alternative engineering work would be phased in to offset any redundancy.*' The latter promise has not been fulfilled, with the result that 430 workers (including 280 skilled tradesmen) will be paid off in September, many of them forced to sign on at the Labour Exchange. As the present unemployment in N. Ireland is almost 6 per cent, it is well worth recalling that when Selwyn Lloyd's pay pause was in operation the unemployment figure in N. Ireland rose to 11 per cent and if the present trend continues a similar situation will apply in 1967.

Due to the non-implementation of assurances regarding alternative work, the workers at the factory imposed an overtime embargo and stopped work for 4 hours on the day the notices were issued to the 430. It is necessary to point out that this is the first time the Redundancy Payments Act has applied in the factory and it has tended to blunt the edge of the struggle. Many of the workers misguidedly believe they can obtain a large sum of money when paid off and immediately obtain alternative employment. This is one issue the movement needs to re-educate its members on: the necessity to resist any redundancy and not be fobbed off with the handshake.

Short's workers believe the reliance of the British Government on American aircraft is not only a threat to the balance of payments problem, but to the future of the aircraft industry in the UK. We believe the Government should reject the recommendations of the Plowden Report and instead go forward with the nationalisation of the aircraft industry, a policy which has been endorsed by the Confederation of Shipbuilding & Engineering Unions and the British T.U.C. Lastly if assurances, previously given were honoured by the Westminster Government, then the workers of Shorts would maintain their right to work in N. Ireland.

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TRUTH ABOUT THAT DEFICIT

Bert Ramelson

THERE was never a shortage of evidence that the incomes policy and its latest form—the wage freeze—were totally irrelevant to the problem of the payments deficit.

A. R. Conan, former Assistant Secretary to the Commenwealth Economic Committee, in his book *The Problem of Sterling* proves that four out of the seven post-war crises of the kind from which we are suffering now—a balance of payments deficit leading to a crisis of confidence and run on the pound—actually took place in periods when our current account balance was in surplus. That is, at times when we were actually exporting more than we were importing.

He also demonstrated that since the war we quickly made good our wartime losses, not only regained but doubled our exports (in volume) and were well set to achieve for the first time in over a century conditions where we could pay our way in the sense of exporting enough to pay for our imports.

The real trouble was that the Government expenditure abroad—mainly for military purposes—and private capital export were rising at a much faster rate than the phenomenal rise in our exports.

Enoch Powell, in an article in last month's *The Banker*, underlines the same point when he says about overseas expenditure:

> Had there been no such expenditure during the last nine years (over which period it has doubled from £253 millions to £500 millions), this country would have had a favourable overall balance of payments totalling £1,942 millions instead of a deficit totalling £1,412 millions.
>
> Figures like these bring home the fact that, contrary to vulgar supposition, the country has indeed been 'paying its way' before the external expenditure of its Government is taken into account.

But if after all this available evidence there were still some doubters as to the total absence of any connection between our wages level with its effects on the competitiveness of our exports and the most recent run on the pound, leading to the panic measures of July 20 with its vicious attack on earnings and the sovereignty of the trades unions, then let them read Mr. Wilson's speech to the TUC at Blackpool.

He described in almost lyrical terms how he had brilliantly managed the economy since October 1964, when he achieved his ambition and became the occupant of No. 10 Downing Street.

> By the early months of this year, we could fairly look forward to the

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> achievement of our target of being in balance in the latter part of the year. In the first five months of the year, before the figures were distorted by the strike in the shipping industry, our exports were 9 per cent above the same period of 1965. This was nearly double the average rate of increase for the past 10 years . . . In some of the most competitive markets in the world our exports have been rising sharply this year—in the United States for example, where they increased by 23 per cent last year and by 32 per cent in the first half of this year over the same period last year.

Such was the bright prospect when things took a turn for the worse leading to the July 20 catastrophic measures.

What then were the events which precipitated the crisis in confidence and the run on the pound? Mr. Wilson in the same speech provided the answer:

> 1. The most serious cause was the rise in import costs, particularly through high prices of copper and other basic materials, caused partly by the high level of activity in America as a result of the Vietnam war, partly by strikes abroad, and by the effects of events in Rhodesia. That level of prices represented an addition to our import bill at an annual rate of over £100 million.
>
> 2. The volume of imports of manufactured goods, held down last year, was rising ominously. Rising incomes not backed by productivity led to higher imports of consumer goods. Capital goods too. Our manufacturers were bringing in modern and sophisticated types of capital equipment from abroad.
>
> 3. But it was not only imports. On capital account there was a worsening through purely fortuitous reasons. Current and capital account together: it became clear that our position was worsening and, at a time when world exchange markets were disturbed by the Euro-dollar squeeze, caused by America's response to her own difficulties when interest rates were rising, when traders and financiers sold sterling to meet that squeeze, this led to financial movements which went far beyond the actual worsening in our balance of payments. At a time when two great reserve currencies, dollar and sterling, were both under pressure, we were bound to bear the brunt of the attack.

These then are the reasons given by Wilson himself for the crisis that developed in July.

If the terms of trade turned against us, adversely affecting our trading balance, because of the war in Vietnam, then surely Mr. Wilson should address himself to Mr. Johnson and demand an end to his aggressive war. How in the world can attacks on the trade unions and the British workers' wages affect the rising prices of our imports due to a war which they abhor and Wilson supports?

If the second factor causing the crisis is the increase in import of manufactured durables and capital goods, then surely the answer is control of imports. How will cuts in real wages deter the manufacturers from importing machinery?

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The third and last factor itemised by Wilson as a cause of the crisis is, of course, linked with the fact that the pound is a world currency and is vulnerable to outside (and inside) speculation as well as, we are now told, whenever the dollar is under pressure.

No one has yet attempted to explain how freezing the British wage and salary earners' incomes is going to prevent any future disturbances caused by 'Euro-dollar squeezes'.

What has been argued is that the attack on the workers' living standards is necessary in order to restore the confidence of the world fraternity of Bankers.

Their confidence is essential, we are told, if we want them to lend us hundreds of millions of pounds to maintain sufficient reserves to enable us to remain a world banker.

What these advocates never explain is why we must sacrifice the potential growth of our economy, the loss in potential earnings and living standards caused by the stop-go-stop exercises, the assumption of the huge burden of debts and interest payments and cease being masters of our own economic policy.

That this is no exaggeration is proved by the following extract from an interview with Mr. Aubrey Jones, Chairman of the Prices and Incomes Board, published in the August issue of *The Banker*:— Asked 'Do you think the Prices and Incomes Bill would have been produced at all had not Britain's banking creditors insisted on it?' His answer was:'No, I do not think it would have.'

This is a high price to pay to retain the 'imperial posture' and provide fortunes for the Merchant Bankers and their City associates.

We should not be frightened by the bogey of the consequences of annoying our creditors. Far from this being a tragedy it could very well be our salvation.

Prevented from borrowing we would be compelled to face reality, to really live within our means. It would compel us to realise that we cannot afford to waste over £300 million a year in foreign exchange to no purpose, to allow wealth produced by the British workers to be used, not to modernise and enrich Britain, but to invest it abroad because it may provide a higher dividend to our parasitic shareholders.

The fight against the wage freeze and against the Governments waste of Britain's resources for the interests of the overseas monopolies is at the same time the true fight for Britain's economic future.

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SUEZ—TEN

On October 29, 1956, the Anglo-French-Israeli war plot, which has since been abundantly exposed by subsequent revelations, against the anti-imperialist regime in Egypt was launched with Israel's invasion of Egypt, followed two days later by the Anglo-French invasion and bombing of Egyptian towns. This infamous aggression provoked giant demonstrations throughout Britain

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'EARS AGO

and the demonstrations in London, pictured above, were the largest seen since the Second Front struggle of 1942-3.

This massive opposition at home, alongside the Egyptian resistance and the superior strength of the peace forces of the world, and the Soviet Union's Note threatening force 'to crush the aggressors and restore peace in the East' led to a cease fire on November 9.

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VIETNAM— OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Hilda Vernon

Secretary, British Vietnam Committee

UNITED STATES war aims in Indo-China are by no means confined to defeating the liberation struggle in South Vietnam and maintaining a permanent foothold there. This is but the essential first step of its long-term policy and is reflected in the various 'peace proposals', all of which evade the central issues of complete withdrawal of U.S. troops and war material from South Vietnam and genuine independence.

American ambition covets at least the whole of Indo-China, in which of course Vietnam is the richest prize. Roosevelt in 1944, seeing France as weak enough to be swept away, and under the pretence of American dislike of colonialism, proposed that Indo-China be placed under international trusteeship. In July 1954, Premier Pham Van Dong drew the attention of the Geneva Conference to American plans when he said:

> The weakening of France as a result of the Indo-China war and her need of American assistance to continue that war, created the necessary pretext and conditions for U.S. intervention. The purpose of that intervention is gradually to oust the French from Indo-China and convert the latter into a U.S. colony, seize its economy and natural resources, suppress the national liberation and democratic movement of its peoples and turn the country into a springboard for the conquest of South-East Asia, into an American war base.

The South-East Asia Treaty Organisation set up by the USA was designed to further this plan by sabotaging the terms of the Geneva Peace Agreements. South Vietnam (though actually only a temporary administrative zone was already being treated as a separate state) was placed under SEATO's 'protective umbrella' along with Laos and Cambodia. But so fierce was the struggle of the South Vietnamese for peaceful re-unification and against the bloodthirsty tyranny of the U.S.-Diemist regime, from political actions in the earliest days, to rudimentary self-defence against increasing terror and repression, then to more advanced forms of armed struggle, that the U.S. was faced with the necessity of increasing its war effort, or abandoning its plans.

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The Staley Plan of June 1961 envisaged three stages:

1. To pacify South Vietnam in 18 months and to establish bases in North Vietnam.
2. To proceed with the military reinforcement of South Vietnam, to rehabilitate its economy and step up sabotage activities in North Vietnam.
3. To develop South Vietnam's economy and attack North Vietnam.

To achieve this, millions of dollars were poured out as vast quantities of war material and U.S. military personnel were brought in and military, naval and air bases constructed. December 1962, which should have seen South Vietnam subdued, with the millions of peasants passive within the 'strategic hamlets' and the guerilla forces wiped out, showed a completely different picture. The strategic hamlet plan was smashed; the guerilla forces had grown in strength; under the leadership of the South Vietnam Liberation Front advanced forms of armed struggle were developed inflicting defeats on the U.S. puppet forces; and the sabotage activities against North Vietnam were a complete fiasco.

Even greater reinforcement of war material and military personnel and more U.S. troops taking a direct part in the fighting led to no change. Whole areas of South Vietnam were liberated and developed under the administration of the Liberation Front; the puppet army scored no victories and suffered a continuing lowering of morale and a draining of its numbers through desertions under the impact of defeats. The liquidation of Diem in November 1963 in the face of these defeats and the growing opposition amongst all sections of the population achieved nothing for the Americans. In August 1964 came the further decisive move by the U.S. to carry out its plans, when the first open attack on North Vietnam was made by American aircraft.

As a cloak for U.S. aggression a whole propaganda drive had been mounted, depicting the South Vietnamese people as terrorised into unwilling opposition to the U.S.-Saigon regime by a small band of Communist terrorists, themselves prodded into action by the government of DRV in the North. In this propaganda campaign increased emphasis was made on the charge that without weapons and personnel sent from the North, the opposition in the South would collapse—propaganda still used in an attempt to justify the large-scale attacks on North Vietnam, which have been increasing in violence since February 1965. This propaganda invention in fact

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has been enlarged to the extent that now the U.S. and British governments, against all evidence and, indeed, all reason, accuse the Democratic Republic of Vietnam of being the aggressor against the half of her country which has been illegally severed from her.

Alongside an intensification of the war in South Vietnam and an increasing use of toxic chemicals, napalm and other terror weapons against the population in the Liberated Areas, the U.S. has developed a diplomatic war against the DRV and the Liberation Front, designed at the same time to counter the rising tide of condemnation and hostility to its war all over the world. This has taken the transparently spurious form of 'peace' offers, together with well-advertised lulls in the bombardment of North Vietnam. It was launched by President Johnson's 'unconditional discussions' speech of April 8, 1965. But he was offering no such thing, for he explained that 'such peace demands an independent South Vietnam—securely guaranteed and able to shape its own relationships to all others'. In other words, Vietnam was to be permanently divided despite the stipulations of the 1954 Geneva Peace Agreements for its peaceful reunification by 1956.

Nor was there any indication of the withdrawal of U.S. troops and armament—'We will not withdraw, either openly or under the cloak of a meaningless agreement'. There were plenty of threats that these would continue to be used because 'they are a necessary part of the surest road to peace'. This peculiar logic was based on the accusation 'that North Vietnam has attacked the independent nation of South Vietnam' and that until North Vietnam ceased this attack bombing raids would be continued and increased. Nor would there be any let-up on the attacks on the South Vietnamese for, as Under-Secretary of State Ball elaborated two days later, the South Vietnam Liberation National Front is 'an instrument and creature of the government of Hanoi' and 'we are prepared to have unconditional discussion with governments, and that would mean the government in Hanoi and not its creature'. For the Vietnamese, either North or South, to have accepted such a proposal would have meant complete submission to American aims. National independence would be abandoned, Vietnam would remain divided or forcibly unified on American terms, and peace in Indo-China and South-East Asia would not be secured, for the U.S. war machine would remain in Vietnam.

The diplomatic success the U.S. hoped to reap from this manoeuvre was openly explained in the press there:

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> Merely negative responses from the Communists will only make crystal-clear where the responsibility lies for pushing South-East Asia and all the world to the brink of the abyss (*New York Times*, April 10).

This theme was leapt on by the Wilson Government, which to this day continues to present the intransigence of Hanoi as the obstacle to peace in Vietnam.

Against this background the DRV's 4-point peace proposals of April 10, 1965, stand out as precise and constructive, opening up the road to real peace, and are rightly acclaimed throughout the world. In accord with the terms and intent of the 1954 Geneva Peace Agreements, they stipulate the ending of U.S. attacks on North Vietnam and cessation of its war in the South; the withdrawal of all U.S. and satellite troops and war material and dismantling of its war bases. Pending the peaceful reunification of Vietnam neither zone to join any military alliance or permit the presence of foreign troops or military installations; the people of South Vietnam to be free to settle their own affairs in accordance with the programme of the Liberation Front and the reunification of Vietnam to be realised by the people of the two zones without foreign interference. Only if these points are accepted can there be discussions or contemplation of a Geneva-type international conference.

For its part the Liberation Front has made clear that so long as the U.S. continues its war against the South Vietnamese people and maintains a clique of traitors in power in Saigon, they must continue to fight for national salvation, the protection of the lives and liberties of the people and in defence of North Vietnam.

For years now U.S. forces have struggled to obtain the mastery of Laos, and are daily bombing the patriotic forces and areas there with this aim. Again and again forces from South Vietnam intrude into Cambodia and attack its villages and military posts. Were the cries of Marshall Ky for 'a march to the North' so much hot air? By no means.

The situation which faces the world today was never more serious. The Vietnamese are fighting valiantly and with tremendous sacrifice, not only to defend their country, but to halt the American war plans of escalation before they become a fact. *They have the right to demand our support.* A key factor for the U.S. is the support it receives from the British government—support which has been given to its every act of aggression. The Prime Minister in tepid words condemned the first attacks on Hanoi and Haiphong while defending the overall war activities of the U.S. But he has not even

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repeated this mild protest at the further raids on these cities. We cannot wait for a repetition of this same performance should the 'march North' indeed be launched, nor allow Britain to be yet further involved with America in its aggression.

What is needed is the strongest movement to force a change of policy—a movement that clearly recognises the Americans as the aggressor, that in condemning its many war crimes against the Vietnamese also condemns those who support its policy; a movement that recognises the justice of the demand of Vietnam for national independence and the right to determine its own future; a movement that recognises that only peace based on this demand will mean that peace is truly established in Vietnam.

There is a world-wide movement of support for Vietnam. There is hardly a country where this is not manifest, from the complete support by governments and peoples of the socialist countries and certain African and Asian countries, countries where a powerful mass movement carries on unceasing activity, to countries like Britain where the full potential strength of the opposition has not yet been mobilised. It is a task of immediate and prime importance that this should be achieved and the whole force of Britain brought into this international movement.

ZIMBABWE AND THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE

George B. Nyandoro
Secretary General, Zimbabwe African People's Union.

(*This important statement, especially written for* Labour Monthly *by Mr. Nyandoro, expresses the viewpoint of the Zimbabwe People's Union on the outcome of the Commonwealth Conference. In this connection, in view of the attempts of the outside press to create a picture of division of the national movement, it is worth noting that in a Resolution unanimously passed at the first Afro-Asian-Latin American People's Solidarity Conference, Havana, January* 1966, *that Conference recognised 'the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) as the only Liberation Movement and the only authentic representative of the African people of Zimbabwe'.—Ed.*, LM.)

THE Zimbabwe African People's Union has made its position quite clear on the issues involved in Southern Rhodesia. Force is the only means left to crush the illegal Regime and even after the

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crushing of the illegal Regime there will still be the problem of the type of Government to run the affairs of the country. Again ZAPU has made it quite clear that only a Government based on One man One vote can meet the wishes of the majority of the people of Zimbabwe.

The Commonwealth Conference Communiqué is significant only in this respect, that it spells out in greater detail the difference between the stand of the British Government and that of the majority members of the Commonwealth. We attach greater importance to the stand of the British Government as this is what will be carried out in Southern Rhodesia.

The Commonwealth stand can be summarised as follows:

(a) That there should be no independence before majority rule, i.e., One man One vote.
(b) That force is the only means that can end the Southern Rhodesia Rebellion.
(c) That complete mandatory sanctions including exports and imports, should be applied under Chapter VII, articles 41 and 42, of the United Nations Charter.
(d) That political restrictees should be released before the formation of an interim government.

The British stand once again has shown the usual deliberate equivocation and complete reluctance to do anything that would upset the existence of a supremacist minority regime in Southern Rhodesia. It is not surprising, therefore, that Britain made a stand at the Conference for continuation of talks about talks. By granting Smith a three months grace Britain has refused to declare unequivocally that majority rule must be established before independence. It has refused the use of force and has opted for selective mandatory sanctions despite the general demand at the Conference for complete mandatory sanctions. On the question of the type of Government to be established after the crushing of the Smith regime—Britain is toying with the idea of an interim Government which will negotiate for independence. It is quite clear from the Communiqué that the British Government has rejected completely all the demands of the majority of the members of the Commonwealth.

ZAPU therefore unreservedly rejects the whole of the British stand and their course of action. We rejected and still reject the so-called six principles and the British sanctions policy as a means of ending the British colonial and settler rule in Southern Rhodesia. Our rejection is based on the fact that the British stand and course of action are a *de facto* recognition of the Smith regime and an

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invitation to Smith to accept a minority independence conferred by Britain.

Our position with regard to the Southern Rhodesia problem is quite clear and simple. Our objective is the establishment of a government based on One man One vote before independence. The question of independence can only be negotiated by a government elected by all the people of Southern Rhodesia on the basis of One man One vote.

Our means to achieve this objective is by the use of force and hence *we as a Liberation Movement have long since embarked on a policy of armed struggle.* We therefore call upon all those who support the objective of our struggle to give us positive and practical assistance. We consider the three following requisites as fundamental to the Constitutional settlement in Southern Rhodesia:

(a) Smith and his Regime must be forced to surrender unconditionally.

(b) Joshua Nkomo and all other political prisoners must be released unconditionally.

(c) A fully representative constitutional conference must be convened for the sole purpose of devising a constitution based on One man One vote.

It is only after these steps have been taken that the question of independence can be considered.

The people of Zimbabwe through their only political Liberation Movement ZAPU are committed to an armed struggle and despite the strength of the British armed and British equipped fascist forces of Ian Smith and despite the aid overtly supplied by South Africa, we will fight till the minority rule is crushed in Zimbabwe.

The imperialists together with the capitalists with vested interests in Southern Rhodesia, are doing everything to weaken our struggle and will continue to create diversive situations in order to help the continuation of a minority rule in the country.

To all our friends and other progressive nations we must make it quite clear that ZAPU, being the Zimbabwe people's movement, makes no apology for its stand over Rhodesia. ZAPU will wage a relentless struggle which will gain momentum with the passage of time till finally the minority settler regime is crushed. The establishment of a people's government based on One man One vote is the only means of ending the crisis.

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POLITICS AND STUDENTS

F. Nicholson

HOW important politically are Britain's half-million full-time students? Of course everyone expects that when there is an international crisis there will be demonstrations in the main student centres. And student life has produced its own forms of political expression, such as the choice some years ago by students of Glasgow University of Albert Luthuli as Rector or more recently by Leeds students of Abram Fischer as their honorary president. The teach-in craze swept British colleges like many other imports from America, and the current hit protest is the picket of honorary graduation ceremonies for Harold Wilson and Michael Stewart.

But we get the point politically about students only if we look at what they are going to be as well as what they are. Not only are they going to staff the professions but also a fast growing range of jobs in industry and commerce are filled by people who have had some further and higher education.

In Andrew Grant's *Socialism and the Middle Classes* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1958) students rate only three passing mentions: as Cambridge students surveyed on emigration; a group newly affected by left ideas in the thirties; and as a section influenced by contact with Eastern Europe after the war. But before people ossify into professional respectability they are the familiar students of rag weeks, stunts and escapades. While they are still students they are more receptive to new ideas, more able to learn lessons which will change the class outlook of the middle classes.

The big youth organisations in this country are paternalistic, and establishment or church dominated. They are run by 'youth leaders' rather than by the young people themselves. Students, in the past a small privileged section, are the exception with over 300,000 members of student unions affiliated to the National Union of Students of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and many more affiliated to the Scottish Union of Students, or un-affiliated. While students share with other young people an eagerness for new and progressive ideas, they have more democratic organisation and scope to express them.

As the number of students has grown and as a proportion of working class children have found their way into the colleges, this traditional freedom has been seen as a threat by the establishment.

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They have met this challenge by encouraging a division in student organisations between the student unions or representative councils, which they seek to confine to cultural and welfare matters, and the political societies meeting obscurely in committee rooms whom they seek to channel into sterile discussion and debate. This is reinforced, especially in the small colleges, by restrictions on the autonomy of student unions and the right to form political and religious societies.

Some of the student unions occasionally take general political decisions but in the main they restrict themselves to specifically student questions. However this gap is bridged at many points. When students feel compelled to express solidarity with their fellow students in Greece and Spain, in Iraq and Iran, in South Africa and Rhodesia, they cannot escape political implications. And the same is true when they lobby parliament for more money for education.

But if the establishment finds it appropriate to impose and maintain restrictions on the students, it is all the more important for progressive students to be in the vanguard of the fight to defend and extend students' rights. There is growing up among students a kind of 'civil rights' movement. They want all the rights working adults have in democratic society, as well as all the rights they think adults have or ought to have.

Firstly, they rebel against college rules governing their private lives in a way that others of their age group are not restricted. *Secondly*, where there are problems of discipline in colleges they want the sort of procedural safeguards and right of appeal that exists in proper law courts, and they want this written into the charters of the universities. *Thirdly*, the right to form political societies is being pressed. Mr. Crosland recently received a Labour Student deputation and though he offered no concessions that would cost money, he did promise them support on the formation of political societies. *Fourthly*, they want full autonomy for their student unions. At present most of them have colonial style constitutions with the colleges having a range of reserved powers. *Fifthly*, perhaps most important, there is widespread discontent with the character of higher education, both what is taught and how it is taught. Student organisations are now putting forward in a serious way the demand for effective representation at all levels when decisions on their courses are taken, rather than cosy staff-student get-togethers after the damage has been done.

Underlying these demands is the proposition that full-time study is a socially useful occupation deserving a wage in its own right. In

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Western Europe this is expressed as the demand for the 'student wage' appropriate to 'young intellectual workers'. In British terms this means a reform of the present student grants position to allow students to study without hardship and without being a burden to their families. That means for everyone in full-time study above school leaving age a grant high enough to pay one's way on, including provision for any dependants. In particular this calls for the abolition of the parental means test, which causes some students to receive only £50 a year though there is no obligation on their parents to give them anything.

Mr. Crosland and *The Times* have been encouraging discussion of the idea that students should have to pay back their grants after they graduate. Naturally students have been horrified at the idea of starting their working lives later than other people and with a millstone of debt round their necks. Already they are trying to get rid of the need to pay up their National Insurance after graduation.

When the Communist Party's national executive discussed students at its July meeting the central theme of the discussion was that students should not be regarded as cut off from all other human experience. On the contrary it is the establishment which encourages the formation of colleges and universities in cathedral towns and away from working-class organisations. And it is the ultra-left which reinforces this by encouraging left-wing students to reject as hopeless the majority of their fellow students and to see their own role as to lead the working class to the promised land. The Communist Party sees the need for a great effort to bring students *as a body* closer to the labour movement. This is not such a distant prospect as one might suppose.

In France, where the labour movement is more sympathetic, the National Union of Students acts as one union among many, striking with CGT backing for educational reforms, but also in solidarity with teachers and miners.

Here, where the Technical Teachers Union has just affiliated to the TUC, we have considerable common ground between the students and the trade unions. The TUC's firm rejection of the ideas of replacing grants by loans helps this process. But the central point of common interest is in winning for children of working-class families the right to full undiluted higher education. There are three requirements for this: fully comprehensive secondary education; vast expansion of higher education; and an extension of the comprehensive approach to higher education.

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However, it is regrettably true that it is the Conservative and Liberal opposition in parliament which is at present arguing against cuts in projected higher education expenditure. At the same time, it is Mr. Crosland and the Labour Government which is imposing the 'Binary' system in higher education. Binary is the opposite of Comprehensive. Higher Education is to be divided into 'Autonomous' and 'Public' sectors. The 'Autonomous' sector is the universities, privileged in respect of staff, funds, and facilities; the 'Public' sector is the colleges run by local education authorities, technical, further education and teacher training colleges. They are expected to be more responsive to public policy, that is economics. For example, last summer the colleges of education were told to prepare for 20 per cent more students *without increased capital expenditure.* It is into the 'Public' sector that the greater proportion of working class children go, and this disproportion appears to be increasing.

The effort to sweep away these barriers to full higher education for working class children is a common responsibility of the student and labour movement.

LABOUR MONTHLY FORTY YEARS AGO

A reformist leadership can act within certain limits but only within those limits. In a period of capitalist prosperity it can win concessions for the workers by a mixture of bargaining, bluff and small conflicts . . . but as soon as the struggle develops to a serious point, to the actual confrontation of class forces, inevitably bringing into play the Capitalist State . . . the reformist leadership is helpless and can only throw up the sponge. It cannot organise and unify the working-class forces on its side under a working-class General Staff to meet and fight the Capitalist State, because to do that would be to destroy its whole basis of so-called democracy, reformism. Therefore it prefers surrender, however abject, humiliating and destructive of its whole old claim of reforms and the protection of wages. But this does not mean that the struggle comes to an end. The economic conditions continue . . . and the workers press forward more than ever. From this point the reformist leadership can only maintain its position by the suppression of the workers . . . But it is a stage of extreme danger for the movement, when the old leadership is already discredited, but the new leadership is not yet strong enough to replace it, and the old leadership still continues to maintain itself by its hold on the machine.

(From Notes of the Month, *Labour Monthly*, October 1926.)

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DOCUMENT OF THE MONTH

[A detailed blue-print for destroying socialism in the German Democratic Republic, after the supposed fulfilment of its annexation, was published recently in Bonn in the form of a volume known as the 'Grey Plan' drafted by the 'Research Council for Questions Connected with the Re-Unification of Germany'. This Research Council was established by the Bonn Government in 1952, and is attached to the West German Ministry for All-German Questions. The Research Council itself is composed of representatives of the main parties in the West German Parliament, various employers' organisations, and special pressure groups such as 'The Working Group of Owners of Factories Sequestrated in the Soviet Occupied Zone' and similar bodies. The actual work of the Research Council, such as drawing up the blue-prints, is conducted by a full-time 'Research Circle'. A GDR spokesman has revealed that at least eight of the 13 members of this Research Circle played a personal part in running the Nazi armaments industry and looting the occupied countries of Europe. Here are some extracts from the 'Grey Plan'.]

The task will be to give a freedom-loving form to the economy and society of Middle Germany (the GDR, Ed.) on the basis of a market and competitive economy. The length of time needed for this transformation cannot be predicted, but it should be kept as short as possible. (p. 16-18.)

The modern road of development in the Federal Republic must be implemented in Middle Germany. . . . Since 1958 the Federal Republic has been integrated step-by-step in the Common Market. Re-unification will mean that Middle Germany will be integrated not only with West Germany, but also with other Common Market Countries. (p. 19.)

By and large it can be stated that all plans have been completed for the smooth implementation of re-unification.... A market economy shall be introduced in re-united Germany. (p. 20.)

The Research Council has dealt in the main with the 'nationally-owned factories' in the industrial sphere. When re-unification comes these factories shall become independent undertakings. . . . In many cases it will be of advantage to conclude 'factory utilisation agreements' which will give full scope to the initiative of private enterprise. (p. 20.)

Steps shall be taken to open private banks, so that the bank machinery is able to meet the demands of a market economy. (p. 21.)

Working conditions will be fixed between the tariff partners (factory owners and workers, Ed.). (p. 22.)

The social security system, unemployment insurance . . . shall be completely freed from the present political, organisational and financial management of the Free German Trade Union Confederation. (p. 359.)

The apprenticeship schools of the Soviet Occupation Zone are to be dissolved. Professional training in the agricultural field shall be adjusted to the conditions ruling after re-unification. (p. 264-265.)

Difficult tasks will have to be tackled at the re-unification in converting the present Agricultural Production Co-operatives into private farms. . . . If several persons should claim a certain piece of land, priority shall be given to . . . persons whose land was confiscated in the course of the 'land reform' in the Soviet Zone. (This means Junkers, other large landowners, and Nazis whose land was confiscated, Ed.) (p. 273.)

(Reprinted from *Democratic German Report*, July 22, 1966.)

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MacDONALDISM

(The Centenary of the birth of Ramsay MacDonald on October 12, 1864 is being widely celebrated, including a commemoration speech by his successor Harold Wilson. It may accordingly be appropriate to reprint this critique already written during the first Labour Government in the Editorial Notes of this journal in May 1924, under the title 'MacDonaldism', as this treatment of his governmental role before the final exposure by events nine years later may not be familiar—apologies are made to old readers from forty-two years ago—to most present-day readers.—Ed., L.M.)

IF anyone had foretold twelve months ago that within a year MacDonald would as Prime Minister lead the working-class movement into the Establishment of a Coalition Government with a Liberal Imperialist and a Conservative ex-Viceroy; voluntary suppression of strikes with the threat of the Emergency Powers Act in the background; use of the Secret Service against Labour; carrying of armaments extension programmes by means of the Labour vote, and coercion in India, he would not have been believed. Yet all this and more has happened with very little effective protest from the working-class movement.

This temporary apparent power of MacDonald is only a reflection of the present balance of classes. But while it lasts it tests the capacity of the working-class movement to resist such inroads, and consequently the power of the working-class to act as an independent force in the immediate future. So far there have been isolated and factional protests and oppositions on particular issues or of particular groups of interests, but there has been no coherent unity or expression. MacDonald has always been able to maintain his position, partly by the support of his own immediate ring of non-labour backers in the key positions, partly by his control of the giving and withholding of place and position among a greedy and not very high-principled crowd, partly by the open protection of the bourgeoisie and their organs of the Press, but mostly by the confusion and incoherence of all opposed to him. There have not lacked revolts and crises on one measure and another: 'I will not stand for this'; 'I will not stand for that': but there has been no attempt to concentrate the issue on to the policy itself which is responsible for these measures, the policy of which Macdonald is the embodiment.

What is MacDonaldism? Let it be noted at the outset that in his York speech MacDonald repudiated the suggestion that he was in

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office, not in power, 'We are in office, with power.' This repudiation was a direct blow in the face to his shiftier and less honest supporters all over the country, who have repeated the parrot cry of 'Office, not Power' *ad nauseam* in the hope of evading responsibility for what has taken place. It is satisfactory that so clear a statement has been made by the Prime Minister. For MacDonald the union with a Haldane, the use of EPA, and coercion in India are not the regrettable necessities of a minority, accepted for the sake of a larger aim, to reach the beautiful ideal of 'Socialism' (this is the innocent picture presented to guileless followers over the country): they are the genuine and voluntary expression of his own policy.

Let it be noted that he twice declared that his Ministry was governing 'in accordance with the principles of the Labour Party'. In the same speech he declared that the largest party in the country was prevented from governing by reason of the fact that 'it is so committed to immediate changes in matters like fiscal affairs that it could not hold office without having a combination of the other two parties made against it'. Now the Conservative Party is generally credited with having dropped Protection for a season since its last conference. Nevertheless it is stated by MacDonald to be committed to such 'immediate changes' that it cannot govern. But the Labour Party in MacDonald's view is not so committed to immediate changes as the Conservative Party: that is to say, it has dropped the National Levy, Nationalisation etc., more completely than the Conservative Party has dropped Protection: and a 'Labour' Government with all the features of the Labour Party programme left out, can be continued for two or three years as government 'in accordance with the principles of the Labour Party'. Certainly this MacDonaldism is worth examining which can so completely suppress and silence the whole objects of the Labour Party in a way that the cleverest Liberal or Conservative statesmanship could not do. What are the forces of which MacDonald is the expression?

MacDonald began, it is recorded, as a Liberal, in fact as a Liberal agent. Now it is no offence to begin as a Liberal or even as a Liberal agent. Men may begin as anything without it being very much their fault: it is what they end as that they are responsible for. And the real charge against MacDonald is not that he began as a Liberal, but that he still regards himself as essentially a Liberal, that he regards his Socialism and Labourism as simply the outcome and growth of Liberalism made perfect. 'The Labour Party', he declared a year ago in his speech at the Holborn Empire, 'stands today as the inheritor of

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the Liberal tradition: we start where they leave off'. This, be it noted, is the view of present-day Liberals. 'The Labour Party' declared the *Manchester Guardian* at the same time, 'is the child of Liberalism . . . If and when there is question of political co-operation the best elements in Liberalism will find it easier to join hands with Labour'. And the *Nation* at the same time speculated on the possible disappearance of the Liberal Party, and after considering as just possible that the result might be a fierce class struggle, concluded: 'It is far more probable that the spirit of Liberalism would return embodied in the Labour Party. But hard work is necessary if Liberal and Labour are to combine in a constructive policy based on good international relationships, working together as a Government with a majority which will make England, etc'. And in the same strain of identification of Labour and Liberalism MacDonald declared at the dinner of Metropolitan Labour Mayors: 'The Labour Party will be the only alternative to the reactionary party, whatever name it may be known by.' Thus the essence of MacDonaldism, it is clear, is to see two forces—Reaction and Progress: and whether Progress is called Labour or Liberal is a very minor matter.

What is Liberalism? Liberalism is of course the philosophy of the bourgeoisie. But this is its historical basis rather than its present significance. Under the banner of Liberalism, of liberty and freedom and equal citizenship, the bourgeoisie overthrew the entrenchments of feudal order and privilege and established their own power. Once they were in power they declared further struggle and class division at an end and unnecessary: society was free and equal as between the millionaire employer and his cringing serfs in the slums and the workhouse; and the rising struggles of the working class in the first half of the nineteenth century were crushed with savage violence. The early revolutionary organisations of the British workers, revealed in revolutionary trade unionism and the Chartist movement, were wiped out of existence and in their place were established new obedient working-class organisations, from which the existing movement has developed, soaked in Liberal philosophy, in law and order and constitutionalism and abject submission to the bourgeoisie. Against Liberalism Marxism stood forth as its mortal enemy: Marxism exposed Liberal Capitalist society as a class society no less than feudalism and slavery, veiled in hypocritical forms to conceal the eternal fact of surplus labour, and called the working class to their mission to destroy it and bring in a true society without classes. But for half a century the anodyne of Liberalism held the British workers

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in its thrall: and the past eloquence of a Gladstone or a Lloyd George on the atrocities in Bulgaria or the iniquities of dukes chained the workers to their servitude a hundred times more effectively than bayonets or guns.

Today Liberalism is no longer the dominant philosophy of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, brought up more sharply against the problem of power by its own development, the growth of antagonism and rivalry between world bourgeois groups and the rise of the working class, has developed to new stages, the stages characterised by Imperialism, by trusts and monopolies, by State concentration and bureaucracy and militarism, and culminating in Fascism and White Guardism. Liberalism has become essentially the philosophy of the petty bourgeoisie, of the middle class of the small owners and professional men, crushed between the growingly fierce struggle of the classes, and looking more and more to a big benevolent impartial State to save them and give them jobs. Here is the happy hunting-ground of pacifism, reformism and collectivism—the modern forms of Liberalism. But Liberalism is still maintained by the bourgeoisie as the means to stifle and suffocate the consciousness of the working class. And here today is the role of MacDonaldism in the working-class movement, as it was the role of Lloyd Georgeism fifteen years ago.

The phases of MacDonald's own career and development illustrate this use by the bourgeoisie of the most typical petty bourgeois expression to stifle the revolutionary force of the working class. In the early years when the Independent Labour Party was struggling to divorce the workers from Liberalism, and was thus performing a revolutionary task, the Independent Labour Party was the universal object of reproach and attack, and its leaders were denounced in the official conferences of the labour movement. In the next stage, when with 1906 success crowned the early patient labours, the failure to make a real break with Liberalism was revealed; and while the workers outside were struggling to more and more direct attacks upon the whole structure of society, the Parliamentary Labour Party under MacDonald was becoming more and more tied with Liberalism. During this period MacDonald blossomed forth in the bourgeois Press as a great 'statesman' with a future, because he represented their best hope of stifling the growing Labour 'unrest'. Then came the war, the open bourgeois conflict and throwing aside of the veil: there is no more use for the 'reconcilers', and if they are not ready to perform a complete somersault like Lloyd George they

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are relegated to the background. MacDonald's career seemed finished to the short-sighted. But the war itself leads once again to the revolutionary struggle of the workers; and it was on the back of this that MacDonald rose once again to his old position and even higher favour, as the opponent of Bolshevism and the apostle of class conciliation. The Press forgets all it has said: he is once again the 'statesman' in the limelight. With unusual frankness the servile biographer 'Iconoclast' remarks that it was the fight with Bolshevism which 'ultimately proved the means by which he at once saved and conquered the Labour Party'. And it was MacDonald himself who wrote in a leading capitalist journal his claim to praise that he had been 'in the forefront of Socialist antagonism to Communism and the Third International'.

Is not the process clear beyond confusion? And all the clearer because in this case the individual in question is a sincere expression of the petty bourgeois outlook. The more sincere MacDonald is, the more use he is to the bourgeoisie, so long as he is skilful and 'practical' enough to keep pace with all the shifts in their politics and not to let his 'idealism' interfere with this. MacDonald represents all that opiate of social pacifism, religion, constitutionalism, and cloudy ethical idealism by which the bourgeoisie hopes to drug and stifle the awakening consciousness of the working class.

What readiness is there for a clear stand against all this? How many of the Labour Party understand what is happening or whither it is tending? In all the spasms of revolt that have taken place, how much intelligent alternative policy to MacDonaldism has been revealed? Half the revolts have been sectional quarrels. Where there have been revolts on principle, they have been isolated principles with no clear total policy or aim. The General Council rushes into public to 'deplore' the use of EPA by a Labour Government. But the General Council does not stop to consider that the only alternative for a Labour Government is to take its stand openly with the class struggle, a course which the General Council itself has not yet adopted. The Clyde group make a good stand on many issues. But when it comes to the central discussion they have nothing to say. They do not take their stand on the class struggle; they are strong in their sentiment and spirit of sympathy with the working class (and angry when the other side calls it 'sob-stuff'), but when it comes to policy and expression they are as much the slaves of the 'nation' and the 'Empire' and the rest of the cant as any.

But an alternative leadership has to be achieved. The triumph of

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MacDonaldism does not mean merely the defeat and frustration of the working-class movement; it means its disruption. The revolts that have taken place may have been confused and imperfect, but they have been symptoms of a situation running deeper than any particular issue, and all the more serious because it is expressing itself in these unconscious sectional movements. For the workers will go forward in any case, and no MacDonald can hold them back. But if MacDonald remains at the head of the movement, then it means a breach in the movement. The new militancy of 'trade union M.P.s' is not the result of a sudden awakening on their part (their past records would absolve them from this charge), but is the compulsory reflection of the awakening of the rank and file. While the workers are awakening to new attacks, the MacDonaldites are all pouring out the propaganda of Industrial Peace. And this is the issue for which the bourgeoisie is playing, and, as their indecent eagerness during the tram strike revealed, the rock on which they hope to wreck the movement. The MacDonald policy, being a bourgeois constitutional policy and therefore an anti-working-class policy, must necessarily involve conflict with now one and now another section of the workers. So long as these sectional oppositions remain unconscious of any larger aim, their occurrence is only part of the general disruption. Only a genuine working-class policy can unite all sections. Such a working-class policy cannot be based on sentiment or querulous opposition or stage leftism: it can only be based on a broad and conscious alternative to MacDonaldism for the policy of the working-class movement. That alternative is Marxism, the modern realisation of which is Communism. The expression of this alternative has to be achieved by all the virile elements in the Labour Party.

R.P.D.

BOOK REVIEWS

Socialist Ideas in Africa
Idris Cox
Lawrence & Wishart, 124 pp., 15s.

EMERGENT AFRICA is a continent in ferment whose future is, turbulently and sometimes violently, being moulded and debated before our very eyes. Because of Africa's common history of subjection and still continuing struggle for independence, the great main issues of our continent are being hammered out on a continent-wide scale. The greatest of these is—in its race to achieve true independence and equality, which path of development shall Africa follow: capitalist or socialist? For many reasons—not least of which is that capitalism usually presented itself in Africa in its most brutal and hateful

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form of foreign colonialism—most Africans reject the capitalist solution and choose socialism.

Therefore, no African politician publicly advocates capitalism. Yet, whether because they are secretly in the service of imperialism, or because of their ambitions for personal enrichment, a number of 'elite' leaders in fact do favour capitalism. They claim to be for 'socialism', but defined or qualified in such a way as to deprive it of all genuine content. Others, genuine but sometimes misinformed patriots, tend to reject Marxism because it is said to be based on 'foreign' phenomena such as the class struggle which they consider have no application in Africa. They seek for a new sort of socialism which will be purely indigenous, arising out of African communal land-ownership and its accompanying democratic and communistic customs, traditions and concepts. Out of this situation arises the fierce battle of ideas (not at all an academic debate, because it vitally affects the immediate and long-term future of 300 million people), the 'strange notions' of 'African socialism', the seemingly bewildering pattern of events and theories of Africa today.

Two years ago Fenner Brockway offered a guide to this bewildering pattern in his book *African Socialism.* Despite his well-known and often demonstrated sympathy with the Africans' struggle against colonialism. Lord Brockway's theoretical befuddlement, reflecting that of the Labour Party, rendered him an untrustworthy guide, the hopeful reader of his book emerging more confused than before he started it. A far more reliable guide to this apparently impenetrable jungle is Idris Cox. In addition to a sympathetic approach he brings the virtues of a firmly Marxist approach, principled but never dogmatic; working-class common sense; and a logical mind.

Idris Cox plants his subject solidly in its background: an Africa in the thick of a revolution against imperialism and neo-colonialism. He examines, sympathetically but dispassionately, the case for a separate 'African' socialism based on the allegedly exceptional nature of traditional African society with its communal system of land tenure. How exceptional, really was it? With tellingly effective citations from Marxist and other authorities, Cox shows that 'Africa does not exist in some sort of vacuum. It is not the only part of the world which has experienced tribal society. In fact all these three different types of early tribal societies ("Asiatic", "ancient or classical"—Greece and Rome—and "Germanic") . . . have much in common'. These sections of his book are not only enlightening in regard to Africa but add to Marxist theory as a whole.

The book also contains terse but meaty chapters on capitalist growth, new economic patterns, Nkrumaism (somewhat too uncritical to my way of thinking, this section) and prospects in Africa. But the central point, hammered home well and truly by Idris Cox, is that Marxist scientific socialism is 'not a European ideology, or Asian, or Latin American'. It is 'a universal ideology founded on a scientific and objective analysis of the basic laws of development'. African conditions provide a basis 'for a vast extension and deepening of the Marxist outlook'. African experience will 'enrich Marxist theory and understanding'. But the root principles are as valid for Africa as anywhere else. 'Marxism and scientific socialism, applied in the specific and infinite variety of conditions in that vast continent, is the only sure way forward for Africa.'

The author himself describes 'this

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small book' modestly enough. 'Far be it from me to pretend that I have found solutions for all the problems.' Yet within the compass of his ten succinct chapters, Idris Cox has accomplished a great deal. He provides his readers with much essential information, balanced opinions, and, above all, a solid basis for making their own assessments of future developments.

MICHAEL HARMEL.

As I Recall: The 1880's to the 1960's
Lord Boyd Orr
McGibbon & Kee, 290 pp., 45s.

IN THIS BOOK, Lord Boyd Orr, one of the great progressive scientists and humanists of our times, takes us on a quick conducted tour through the varied experiences of his life, giving us brief illuminating glimpses into his ideas on a multitude of subjects, each one food for thought making the reader want to follow it through in greater detail.

Take his remarks on education. Like so many teachers (and Boyd Orr served his time in the classroom), he is concerned about the lack of facilities, which in the sphere of higher education causes students to concentrate too much on passing examinations, for fear that failure would mean having to leave to make room for others. This tyranny of the examination leads to specialisation on narrow lines, and Boyd Orr makes a reassessment of our education so that it will produce 'men of wisdom with a knowledge beyond their specialised subjects'. He is well aware of the importance of home conditions for education. 'Not the least important advance in education would be the clear-out of the slums so that all children are born in decent and comfortable houses' (p. 54).

The conditions of life in the slums of Glasgow at the turn of the century made a tremendous impression upon Boyd Orr, giving him an intense hatred of unnecessary hunger and poverty, which affected his whole career. For Lord Boyd Orr is best known as the man who built up the Rowett Institute of Animal Nutrition from nothing; as the man who exposed the malnutrition rampant in Britain during the 'thirties; and as the man who, as Director-General of the Food and Agricultural Organisation, fought gallantly but with insufficient clarity against the vested interests of U.S. and British imperialism to try, without success unfortunately, to establish and operate a World Food Plan, which would have put Malthus, hunger and the 'population explosion' into the dustbin of history.

Boyd Orr's Food Plan was to operate through a Board under the United Nations with representatives on it from all areas of the world. It was to have authority to provide all food-deficient countries with long-term loans to enable them to purhcase surplus foods from food-exporting countries and industrial products needed to modernise their agriculture to increase food production. The loans were to be free of interest or repayment of capital until hunger and abysmal poverty had been eliminated. The country receiving loans was to be free to use them to buy industrial goods needed for agriculture from whichever country it could get them cheapest and most suitable to its needs. The Food Board was to have power to buy up stocks in countries with an exportable surplus of storable foods, not immediately marketable after a bumper harvest, and to release them after a bad world harvest, in an attempt to stabilise prices. It was also to have power to promote schemes aimed at doubling production in twenty years. Boyd Orr argued correctly that the increase in the world's

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wealth, beginning with food and later with industrial products, would bring about a great expansion in trade with increased prosperity for all, and that the success of the scheme would cement co-operation between all countries.

What happened to this plan at the Washington Conference called in 1947 to work out the details (it had already been approved in principle seven months before at the Copenhagen Conference)? The first speaker, as at the conference in Copenhagen, was the United States delegate and he said that 'the great powers were not prepared to give any authority or funds to any international organisation for the purpose set out in the proposal for a World Food Board. By the great powers he meant America and Britain. . . . Russia, surely one of the great powers, sent a message to Mr. La Guardia, head of the UNRRA, that it would join if the United States and the United Kingdom joined . . . The delegates were so stunned by this reversal of policy by the United States that no other delegate wanted to speak and the meeting broke up in confusion' (p. 191). At the annual FAO Conference six months later at the Palais des Nations at Geneva, 'The British delegates felt that they could be arrogant and stamp their feet on FAO because they had behind them the British Foreign Office which was opposed to any kind of international co-operation, and America which had repudiated its support for a World Food Plan' (p. 193).

Lord Boyd Orr does not draw all the necessary conclusions. He makes it clear that selfish vested interests were behind the sabotaging of the World Food Plan, but he tries desperately to give the USA and Britain the benefit of the doubt. Thus he seems to regard Truman's Point IV and Britain's Colombo Plan as part of the movement for international co-operation on the same level as the 1950 UN Technical Assistance Conference. He limits his criticism to the following: 'It would have been better if all the technical advisers had been controlled by one organisation'. Point IV and the Colombo Plan were used to maintain the spheres of U.S. and British imperialism. The same motivation was behind the sabotaging of the World Food Plan in the first instance. It is necessary to appreciate this, in order to understand that the fight against hunger is inseparable from the fight against imperialism and to act accordingly. We must know our enemies.

Be that as it may, Lord Boyd Orr makes quite clear what has to be done to overcome hunger in the world. 'It has been estimated that to make a sizeable dent in the hunger and poverty of half the population of the world something like the equivalent of 10,000 million dollars a year would be needed. That is about 10 per cent of the total military budget which the world spends on armaments and the space race. Since leaving FAO, I have tried to promote a policy which would bring a situation where the two greatest evils in the world today—a nuclear war and the revolt of the poverty-stricken coloured half of the population against the domination of the white man—would cancel each other out' (p. 210). That policy, involving political co-operation between socialist and capitalist countries, with progressive reductions in arms expenditure, is one we can all agree upon.

TONY CHATER.

A House on Clerkenwell Green

Andrew Rothstein

Lawrence & Wishart, 80 pp., 7s. 6d.

THE TITLE OF THIS small volume implies that it might be a 'thriller'.

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This is precisely what it is, a thrilling story of a house, now known as Marx House. History and biography are to my mind the most satisfying forms of literature, and this book is a happy combination of both, a history of the struggles of the working class in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and a biography of this famous house.

Mr. Rothstein has very faithfully recorded the ideals and aspirations of the working-class movement in the days of struggle. The first chapter deals with the English class relations in the early part of the eighteenth century, as well as the charity schools, and in particular with the Welsh Charity School which had its home in the 'house' from 1738 to 1772. The contempt in which the leaders of the church held the 'lower orders' and their families is excellently shown in the many quotations from the highly placed clergy in pages 13 and 14.

The analysis of trades operating in Clerkenwell makes most interesting reading. It is true of course, that in the expansion of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was a marked rise in the wages of the skilled workers, but this was offset by the deterioration of the unskilled worker, and pauperism was rife.

The very large number of trade unions meeting in Clerkenwell made it inevitable that the 'Green' should be the rallying point for the growing feeling of the workers, and demonstrations attended by thousands were constantly being held. The role of the Radical Clubs prior to the formation of a Socialist movement is recalled and it is well to remember the debt which we owe to these pioneers.

Perhaps the most fascinating chapter is that on the London Patriotic Club which had its headquarters in the 'house' from 1872-1892. It was about this time that William Morris referred to the 'depth of degradation to which the ordinary English workman has been reduced'. The next tenant of the 'house' was the Twentieth Century Press which did so much to produce the pamphlets which had such an influence in their day.

Many will be aware of the great efforts which Mr. Rothstein has made to preserve this unique monument, and some may know of the difficulties encountered.

Mr. Rothstein writes, 'A House on Clerkenwell Green thus presents a striking and perhaps unique continuity of historical association over more than two centuries with the London working class in particular and with the British working-class movement in general . . . There can be hardly another house in these islands with such a claim of successive links with the working class'.

ALDERMAN F. TONGE.

Industry and Labour in the USSR
Edited by G. V. Osipov
Tavistock Publications, 294 pp., 45s.

THIS IS ONE of the most important books on advanced economics and sociological theory, as applied in the Soviet Union, to become available here. It consists of a series of essays by Soviet social scientists, selected by and translated under the supervision of an editorial board of Soviet specialists, and provides current interpretations of Marxism as applied to present-day sociological problems and developments in sociological theory. Apart from its importance for Western scientists, offering as it does the experience of Soviet economists and sociologists, it contains a wealth of facts and statistics, useful weapons for the refutation of those who would belittle the Soviet Union's achievements.

P. HAMMARLING.

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